

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1568

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CANBERRA 7290

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY VANCE FROM AMBASSADOR ALSTON; PLEASE PASS
TO THE WHITE HOUSE FOR THE PRESIDENT AND DR. BRZEZINSKI

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, AS
SUBJ: A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

1. MR. PRESIDENT, IN DUE COURSE YOUR QUEST FOR PEACE AND
WORLD ORDER WILL HAVE TO BRING YOU INTO THE PACIFIC AREA.
I SUGGEST THAT IN EARLY 1978 YOU UNDERTAKE A TRIP TO TOKYO,
ONE OR MORE OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WHOSE GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS
WE SUPPORT, AND AUSTRALIA. A VISIT BY YOU TO THESE COUNTRIES
WILL EMPHASIZE BEYOND DISPUTE AMERICA'S FIRM RESOLVE TO
REMAIN A PACIFIC POWER. THIS TELEGRAM IS IN SUPPORT OF THIS
PROPOSITION, AND IS IN ANTICIPATION THAT YOU MAY BE RECEIVING,
IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE, A FORMAL INVITATION FROM YOUR FRIEND,
PRIME MINISTER FRASER, WHO HAS TOLD ME HE WANTS VERY MUCH TO
HAVE YOU COME.

2. IT IS A DECADE SINCE AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT VISITED
AUSTRALIA, THE LAST SUCH OCCASION HAVING BEEN LYNDON
JOHNSON'S QUICK TRIP IN 1976 FOR THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR
HIS FRIEND, PRIME MINISTER HAROLD HOLT. WORSE YET, THE
ONLY PRECEDING VISIT BY AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT WAS LYNDON
JOHNSON'S OFFICIAL VISIT A YEAR EARLIER. SUCH A RECORD

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OF NEGLECT DOES NOT SPEAK HIGHLY FOR THE UNITED STATES,
WHICH HAS REPEATEDLY SAID IT CONSIDERS AUSTRALIA TO BE
ONE OF ITS CLOSEST FRIENDS AND PARTNERS, A TREATY ALLY
WITH WHOM WE HAVE FOUGHT FOUR WARS (INCLUDING KOREA AND
VIETNAM), HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO YOUR EFFORTS TO AVOID A
PREMATURE PLUNGE INTO A WORLD PLUTONIUM ECONOMY, A COUNTRY
WHICH IS HOST TO HUNDREDS OF AMERICAN COMPANIES AND THOU-

SANDS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS LIVING AND DOING BUSINESS HERE, AND A COUNTRY WHICH ALLOWS US TO USE ITS SOIL FOR STRATEGICALLY CRITICAL DEFENSE AND INTELLIGENCE FACILITIES.

3. I KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND THE "KITH AND KIN" ARGUMENT, AND WILL THEREFORE NOT WAST YOUR TIME ON IT.

4. WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO US TODAY THAN HISTORY AND CULTURE IS THE THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP WE HAVE IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC. AUSTRALIA MAY BE MORE IMPORTANT TO JAPAN, IN ABSOLUTE TERMS, THAN IT IS TO US (IT RANKS ONLY 14TH AMONG OUR TRADING PARTNERS; 54 PCT OF AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN TRADE LAST YEAR, HOWEVER, WAS WITH A SINGLE COUNTRY - JAPAN) BUT THAT VERY IMPORTANCE TO JAPAN IS AS SIGNIFICANT TO OUR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS AS THE PURELY BILATERAL US-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONSHIP. IF OUR OFT-REPEATED DECLARATIONS ABOUT THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF NATIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY ARE TO GAIN THE SUPPORT THEY REQUIRE, SURELY THE THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN AUSTRALIA, JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES IS ONE WE SHOULD NURTURE.

5. FURTHERMORE, IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO ENSURE THAT AUSTRALIA REALIZES THAT WE DON'T REGARD HER SIMPLY AS A HOSPITABLE HOST FOR OUR ECONOMIC AND SECURITY NEEDS. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE POLITICAL ATTENTION THAT AMERICAN PRESIDENTS UNQUESTIONINGLY GIVE TO OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES, TO
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JAPAN, CANADA, MEXICO, THE SOVIET UNION, EASTERN EUROPE, CHINA, AND EVEN LATIN AMERICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA, AUSTRALIANS SOMETIMES BEGIN TO FEEL, AND I THINK WITH JUSTIFICATION, THAT WE CALL THEM "OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES" SIMPLY FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR RESOURCES AND OUR DESIRE TO USE THEIR COUNTRY FOR JOINT DEFENSE AND INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES, WITHOUT ANY REAL SENSE OF DEVOTION TO THE "PARTNERSHIP" WE SAY WE SHARE.

6. I REALIZE THAT THERE ARE INNUMERABLE COMPETING DEMANDS FOR YOUR ATTENTION, AND I WOULD NEVER TRY TO PERSUADE YOU TO TAKE THE TIME TO COME ONLY TO AUSTRALIA - MUCH AS I WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU COME ONLY TO AUSTRALIA; RATHER, I BELIEVE YOUR FIRST TRIP INTO THE PACIFIC SHOULD BE TO THOSE PLACES WHERE YOUR PRESENCE CAN MOST ADVANCE THOSE INTERESTS FOR WHICH YOU CAMPAIGNED AND WON THE PRESIDENCY - WORLD PEACE AND ORDER, THE SPIRIT OF PARTNERSHIP THAT THE INDUSTRIALIZED DEMOCRACIES SHARE, AS WELL AS THE HOPES OF THOSE NEW NATIONS, SUCH AS THE MEMBERS OF ASEAN, WHICH SEEK TO PROVIDE BOTH ECONOMIC WELL-BEING AND DEMOCRACY FOR THEIR PEOPLES. FOR THOSE REASONS, I BELIEVE YOUR VERY FIRST VISIT TO THE PACIFIC SHOULD INCLUDE BOTH THE NATIONS WHO ARE OUR

PRINCIPAL ALLIES (JAPAN AND AUSTRALIA) AS WELL AS THOSE
EMERGING DEMOCRACIES LIKE SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, AND PERHAPS
INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES, WHOSE ASPIRATIONS WE WOULD
LIKE TO ENCOURAGE.

7. IN TERMS OF TIMING, AUSTRALIA SOON FACES NATIONAL
ELECTIONS IN WHICH, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1969, THE
UNITED STATES IS NOT AN ISSUE. THEY WILL BE HELD EITHER
IN DECEMBER OR NEXT MAY. WHOEVER WINS, AND I SHOULD SAY
NOW THAT I BELIEVE IT WILL BE YOUR FRIEND MALCOLM FRASER,
WILL BE PRIME MINISTER FOR THE REMAINDER OF YOUR FIRST TERM
IN OFFICE. A VISIT FROM YOU THIS SPRING, SAY FEBRUARY OR
MARCH, WOULD AVOID GETTING CAUGHT UP IN AUSTRALIAN POLITICS,
AND WOULD CEMENT THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH WILL EXIST DURING
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THE REMAINDER OF YOUR FIRST TERM OF OFFICE AND THROUGH THE
ENTIRE LIFE OF THE NEXT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. BUT WHENEVER
THE VISIT OCCURS, SINCE YOUR OWN CONSIDERATIONS WILL HAVE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED WHITE HOUSE.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 CANBERRA 7290

NODIS

TO BE PARAMOUNT, I BELIEVE VERY STRONGLY THAT IT SHOULD
BE DURING YOUR FIRST VISIT TO THE PACIFIC. FAR FROM BEING
JUST AN EXERCISE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS, A VISIT BY YOUR TO
AUSTRALIA WILL PAY OFF HANDSOMELY DURING YOUR PRESIDENCY
BY SMOOTHING THE WAY FOR THE COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION

THAT MAKES AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION IN OUR SHARED ENDEAVORS
SO IMPORTANT.

8. AND SO I ASK THAT YOU STOW THESE THOUGHTS IN THE BACK OF
YOUR MIND, AND THAT YOU DIRECT YOUR STAFF THAT WHEN THEY
BEGIN WORKING ON YOUR FIRST TRIP INTO THE PACIFIC, THEY AVOID
THE TEMPTATION TO OVERLOOK OUR AUSTRALIAN ALLY. AMERICAN
PRESIDENTS HAVE NEGLECTED AUSTRALIA FOR TOO LONG NOW, UNFAIRLY,
NO MATTER HOW VALID THE REASONS OR HOW PRESSING THE OTHER
DEMANDS ON TIME. WE NEED TO RECTIFY THIS, AND THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO THE JOB.

9. AUSTRALIANS WOULD WELCOME YOU; FRANKLY, I CANNOT IMAGINE
YOUR GETTING, ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, A FRIENDLIER RECEPTION
THAN THE ONE I KNOW WOULD GREET YOU HERE. AND, YOUR COMING
HERE WOULD PRODUCE A MEASURE OF FORGIVENESS FOR YOU HAVING
SENT THEM A FRIEND RATHER THAN A CAREER DIPLOMAT.

10. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, ELKIN AND I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOU
AND YOUR FIRST LADY IN OUR NEW HOME, WHICH WE BELIEVE YOU
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WILL FIND, IF NOT QUITE SO SPACIOUS AS THE WHITE HOUSE,
AT LEAST MODESTLY COMFORTABLE.
ALSTON

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